

QUARTERLY BUSINESS SURVEY NO. 2

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

I. AVERAGE WAGE AND SALARY EARNINGS

II. MOVEMENTS IN STOCKS

Preliminary Results of the second of the series of Quarterly Business Surveys are set out below. These surveys are conducted on a sample basis and included within the sample private firms whose pay-rolls are about 25 per cent. of total pay-rolls subject to tax. The results are built up from the sample but will reflect any deficiencies present in the sample.

I. AVERAGE WAGE AND SALARY EARNINGS.

The first part of Quarterly Business Survey No. 2 asked for number of employees and wage and salary earnings for the last pay period of September, 1947. The information was classified into male and female; adult and junior, and manual and other workers. The object of the enquiry was to obtain information on differences in earnings for the different groups and for different industries which would give a picture of the wage structure in Australia.

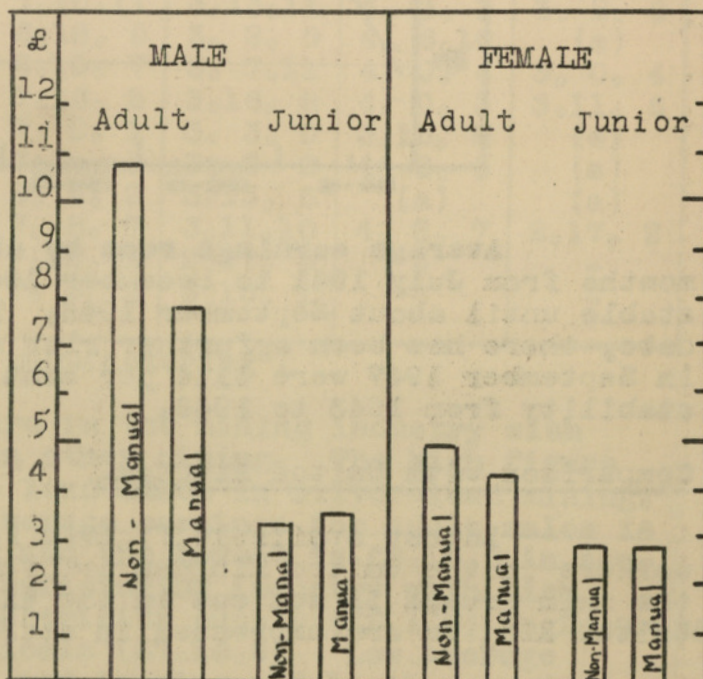
Average Earnings for All Industries.

The following table and chart show the average weekly earnings for each class of worker for all industries combined and for manual workers in manufacturing. The figures exclude rural industry and government employees. They include all payments made to employees including over-time and bonuses, and differ from award rates by short-time and over-time and payments above award. Non-manual earnings cover a wide range of employees from unskilled clerical workers to managing directors.

TABLE I. AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS, SEPTEMBER, 1947
ALL INDUSTRIES.

	Male	Female
<u>All Industries</u>		
ADULT		
Manual	7.15. 9	4. 4. 1
Non-manual	10.16. 0	4.17.10
All adults	8.11. 8	4.10. 1
JUNIOR		
Manual	3. 7. 6	2.15.10
Non-manual	3. 4. 6	2.15. 9
All Junior	3. 6. 7	2.15. 9
ALL EMPLOYEES	7.19. 4	3.19.11
<u>Manufacturing</u>		
ADULT		
Manual	7.12.10	4. 5. 2
JUNIOR		
Manual	3. 7.11	2.17. 2

Figure 1.



Over the whole field of industry female earnings average 50.2 per cent. of male earnings, with adult females earning 52.5 per cent. of the adult male earnings. As compared with adults, junior females were better off than junior males, receiving 61.9 per cent. of adult earnings as compared with 38.5 per cent. for junior males.

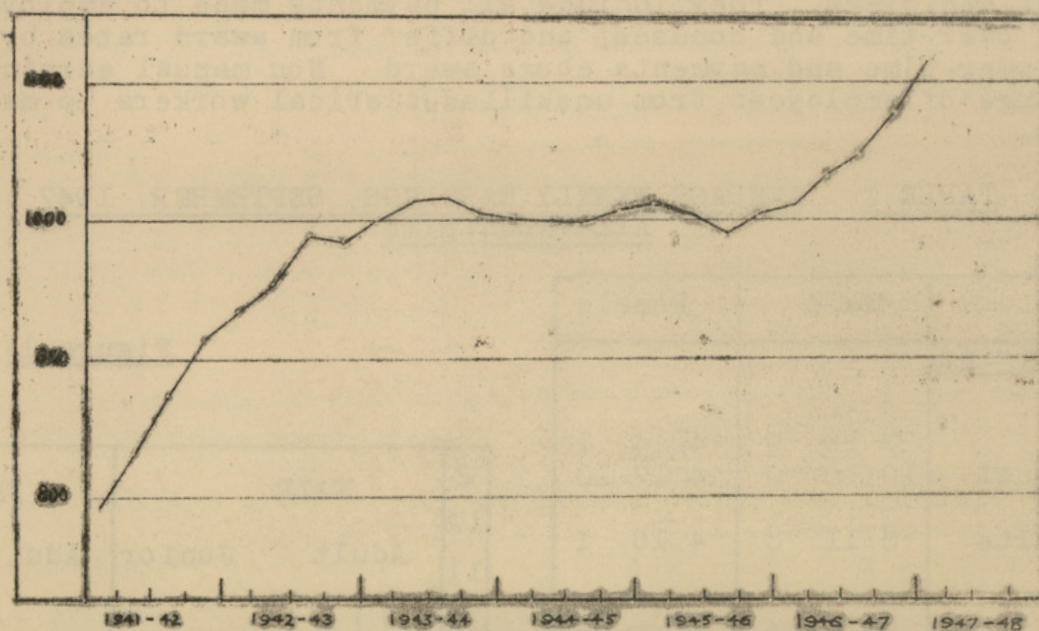
Among manual workers the disparities were not quite so great, adult female manual workers receiving 54 per cent. of the male earnings (55.7 per cent. in manufacturing). Junior male and female manual workers earned 43.3 per cent. and 66.4 per cent. respectively, of the corresponding adult earnings (44.4 per cent. and 67.1 per cent. respectively in manufacturing industries).

The reported variations in the earnings of non-manual workers are of limited significance because of the variety in the types of employees included. The figures for adult males in particular are affected by the inclusion of a considerable number of highly-paid executive and professional employees. Mainly as a result of the inclusion of these employees, the ratio of adult female wages to adult male, drops to 45.3 per cent. for non-manual workers with junior male and female workers earning respectively 29.9 per cent. and 57 per cent. of the adult wage.

Recent Movements in Average Earnings.

No figures for average earnings are available for years before 1941-42 except for factories, and the figures since that date make no distinction between the different classes of employees. The following chart shows the movement in average earnings of all employees covered by payroll tax from 1941-42 to date.

Fig. 2. Index of Average Earnings (Base: 1945-46 = 1000)



Average earnings rose by about 25 per cent. in the eighteen months from July 1941 to December 1942 and then remained relatively stable until about September 1946. In the twelve months since that date, there has been a further rise of 11 per cent. and average earnings in September 1947 were 11.4 per cent. higher than in the period of stability from 1943 to 1946.

Comparison with United Kingdom.

Latest available figures for average earnings of manual workers in the United Kingdom are for April 1947. A comparison for the main groups is set out in the table. Average earnings for the United Kingdom are expressed in sterling.

TABLE II. AVERAGE EARNINGS OF MANUAL WORKERS IN AUSTRALIA
AND UNITED KINGDOM.

	Australia Sept. 1947 £s.	U.K. April 1947 £stg.	Australia as percentage of U.K.
Adult Males	7.15. 9	6. 3. 5	126.2
Junior Males	3. 7. 6	2. 7. 4	142.6
Adult Females (x)	4. 4. 1	3. 7. 4	124.9
Junior Females (x)	2.15.10	2. 0. 2	139.0

(x) Over and under 21 in Australia; over and under 18 in U.K.

For adult males, average earnings in Australia are 26.2 per cent. higher than in the United Kingdom, but, if the U.K. figures are converted to Australian currency, the two figures are virtually the same. On the other hand, the earnings of junior males are 42.6 per cent. higher in Australia and 15 per cent. higher if allowance is made for exchange. The comparison for females is distorted by the U.K. classification of females of 18 and over as adult, as against 21 and over for Australia. If some allowance is made for this factor, it appears that adult female earnings are appreciably lower in Australia than in U.K. if both are expressed in Australian currency, while junior females receive substantially higher average earnings in Australia.

Average Earnings for Selected Industries.

Average earnings for certain selected industries are set out in the following table. The comparison is limited to manual workers because the wide range of occupations of non-manual employees makes detailed comparison uncertain.

TABLE III. AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS OF MANUAL WORKERS,
SEPTEMBER, 1947.

	Adult Males	Junior Males	Adult Females	Junior Females
Coal mining	10. 4. 2	5.14. 2	-	-
Other mining	11. 2. 6	4.14.10	-	-
Stone, earthenware, glass, etc. mfrg.	7.11. 4	3.15. 3	3. 7. 1	(a)
Engineering, metal working	7.17. 3	3. 9. 6	4. 9. 6	3. 2. 3
Vehicle building, assembly, etc.	7.12. 8	2.14. 5	4. 6. 7	(a)
Textiles manufacturing	7. 2. 1	3. 5. 6	4. 6.11	3. 2. 4
Clothing manufacturing	7. 8. 2	3. 5. 8	4. 5. 8	2.13. 2
Food, drink and tobacco mfrg.	7.10.11	3.13.11	4. 3. 1	3. 2. 0
Sawmilling, woodworking, etc.	6.18. 6	3. 2. 9	4. 6.10	(a)
Paper making, printing, etc.	8.10. 7	3. 7.11	4. 0. 4	3. 0. 4
Chemical manufacturing	7.16. 5	3.16. 8	4. 0. 3	3.11. 6
Tanning, leather goods mfrg.	7. 8. 1	3. 3. 0	3.13. 8	(a)
Rubber goods manufacturing	7.15. 1	3. 9. 0	4. 8. 5	(a)
Gas & electricity supply	8. 1. 2	3.15. 6	(a)	(a)
Other manufacturing	7. 8. 7	3.11.10	4. 8. 7	2.17. 2
Building	7.12. 1	2.17. 5	-	-
Road Transport	7. 6. 2	3.15. 1	-	-

(a) Included with "Other manufacturing".

Highest average earnings are in the mining industry with £10.4.2 in coal mining and £11.2.6 in other mining. The high figure in other mining is partly due to the lead bonus in silver-lead mining. In manufacturing industry, highest average earnings for adult males is £8.10.7 in paper making and printing and the lowest is £6.18.6 in saw-milling, woodworking, etc. Other manufacturing industry with high average earnings includes gas and electricity supply (£8.1.2) engineering and metal working (£7.17.3) and chemicals (£7.16.5). Low average earnings appear in textiles (£7.2.1) and tanning and leather goods manufacturing (£7.8.1). Average adult male earnings in the building industry are £7.12.1 and in road transport £7.6.2.

Adult female earnings are high in metal working, rubber goods and textiles. Junior earnings are high in the chemical industry and in gas and electricity supply and the manufacture of earthenware, glass and other clay, stone and mineral products.

These differences in average earnings reflect not only such matters as skill required, industry loadings, apprenticeship and similar differences in work value but also the extent to which over-time and short-time is being worked.

II. MOVEMENTS IN STOCKS

In the second part of Quarterly Business Survey No. 2, certain information was sought on changes in stocks. Analysis of the information supplied is still in a very early stage but is sufficient to indicate that during 1946-47 the value of stocks held by manufacturers and traders rose by a third from £330m. to £440

This increase of £110m. represents an absorption of goods greater than either expenditure on capital equipment or expenditure on building during the year. It is substantially greater than the expenditure on public works or on all government administration and represents over 10 per cent. of all expenditure by consumers during the year.

Some part of the increased value of stocks probably reflects higher prices, but the bulk of the increase has arisen from the process of restoration of stocks to normal levels.

Manufacturers' stocks increased by £60m. or about 25 per cent. Increases for the main groups were £25m. (35%) for engineering, metal working and vehicles; £5m. (15%) for textiles and clothing; £15m. (30%) for food, drink and tobacco; and £15m. (20%) for all other manufacturing.

Traders' stocks increased by £50m. or nearly 50 per cent. Wholesalers showed an increase of £30m. (55%) and retailers an increase of £20m. (40%).

The much greater increases for traders than manufacturers may indicate that more goods are now reaching the end of the "pipe line" and that an increased production of civil goods is about to flow through to consumers.

Commonwealth
Bureau of Census and Statistics,
Canberra, Australia.

23rd December, 1947.